

Remarks

Claim amendments

In the telephone interview of November 16, 2005, Bruce Sunstein discussed the claim structure in relation to the Dodge et al. reference. After discussion of the reference in relation to the claims, the Examiner asserted that a limitation to the effect in part (b) of claim 48 that there is formed a complex consisting of aptamer and target molecule would be clear of the Dodge et al. reference. The Examiner intended to perform a supplemental search to confirm allowability over the prior art, and if confirmed, would allow the application after appropriate amendment by the Examiner or Applicants.

Therefore, claims 48, 50-52, 56, 64 and 68 are herein amended (claims 1-47 were previously cancelled). Claim 48 is amended to specify that substantially all of the target molecule binds to aptamer in step (b), "to form a complex consisting essentially of aptamer and target molecule". Support for the amendment is found in the application, p. 7, lines 16-17 ("Novel features of the methods described herein include the use of a single entity that is both the binding entity and the reporter molecule"); p. 1, lines 25-27 ("Upon mixing the aptamer with a sample containing target molecule, the aptamer binds to the target molecule and the aptamer-bound target molecule is then separated from the remaining mixture by the use of affinity"); p. 13, lines 18- 21 ("The aptamer is added to the sample, whereupon all target molecule binds to the aptamer"); Examples F, p. 20, lines 14-16 ("An aptamer specific for the desired target molecule is allowed to combine with the target molecule in a sample, such that all the target molecule binds to the aptamer"); and in Figures 1 - 4.

Claims 50 and 51 are amended to make concentration singular, the corresponding dissociation constant singular, and aptamer singular, for reasons of clarity.

Claims 52, 56 and 68 are amended to removed an inadvertent underline character between the words “a” and “low” (claim 52); between “is” and “selected” (claim 56); and between “quantity” and “of” (claim 68). Claim 64 is amended to delete the parenthetical phrase “(including milk)” which Applicants intended to delete in Response G, and to add a comma between food and beverages, for reasons of clarity. Applicants respectfully submit that no new matter is added with these amendments, and that all claims are in condition for allowance. Applicants therefore request withdrawal of all claim objections and claim rejections and issuance of a notice of allowance.

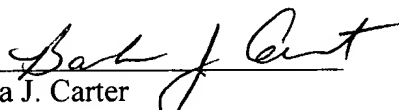
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Conclusion

It is believed that no extension of time is required or that any fees are needed for submission of this communication; however, if fees are required for the timely consideration of this application, please charge deposit account number 19-4972.

It is submitted that all claim objections and rejections have been addressed, and that all of the pending claims are now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application and issuance of a notice of allowance. The Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned if any matters remain outstanding so that they may be resolved expeditiously.

Respectfully submitted,


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